In the Claims

1.   (Previously Presented) A method to access one or more inactive options resident on a device remotely located from a centralized facility comprising the steps of:

accessing a graphical user interface (GUI) electronically linked to a centralized facility and configured to facilitate selection from a number of option identifying parameters;

selecting at least one of the number of option identifying parameters for identification of one or more inactive options resident on the device;

transmitting an electronic request for activation of the selected one or more inactive options to the centralized facility, wherein the electronic request is transmitted via a public communication interface; and

authorizing transmission and installation of a software key in response to the electronic request, wherein the transmission of the software key is via a private communication interface such that the private communication interface electronically connects the centralized facility to the device.

2.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the software key is configured to activate the one or more inactive options and is transmitted to and installed on the device.

3.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further including the steps of inputting a system ID, a host ID, a client ID, and a password to gain access to the selection step.

4.   (Original)   The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of formulating the electronic request by:

inputting a user ID;

inputting a system ID;

selecting a modality;

selecting a software package; and

selecting a usage period.

5.   (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of requesting use of the one or more inactive options for one of a trial period, a pay-per-use period, a limited access period, and an indefinite period.

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6. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising generating a software key if the centralized facility grants access to the inactive option, wherein the software key is unique for each electronic request.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the software key is an alphanumeric code.

9. (Previously Presented) An access granting system comprising:

a computerized network;

a device having at least one non-enabled software application resident in memory thereon;

a plurality of computers connected to the computerized network, wherein at least one of the plurality of computers displays selection data to a user in a form of a graphical user interface (GUI);

a remote centralized facility electronically connected to the device and having a database, wherein the remote centralized facility includes a computer programmed to:

receive a host ID input, wherein the host ID corresponds to a physical location of the device;

identify a user selection of the at least one non-enabled software application;

receive a request from an authorized user requesting enablement of the identified user selection;

generate a software enabler designed to permit access to the selected non-enabled software application in accordance with the received request; and

transmit the software enabler from the centralized facility to the device.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 9 wherein the computer of the centralized facility is further programmed to:

receive a system ID input;

identify a modality selection; and

decide whether to generate and transmit the software enabler based on the host ID input, the system ID input, and the modality selection.

11.   (Original)   The system of claim 9 wherein the computer of the centralized facility is further programmed to compare the request comprising a system ID, a host ID, a user ID, a selected non-enabled software application; and an identified modality to user and device data stored in the database, and generate the software enabler, wherein the software enabler is specific to the request and non-reusable.

12.   (Original)   The system of claim 10 wherein the computer of the centralized facility is further programmed to determine if the user is authorized to operate the selected non-enabled software application.

13.   (Original)   The system of claim 9 wherein the device is a medical component including one of a cardiology device, a computed radiology device, a computed tomography device, a magnetic resonance imaging device, an x-ray device, an ultrasound device, a picture archiving and communication device, a nuclear medicine device, and a positron emission tomography device.

14.   (Canceled)

15.   (Original)   The system of claim 9 wherein the GUI is configured to authorize electronic communication between the centralized facility and the device.

16.   (Original)   The system of claim 9 wherein a user selection of a modality causes a list of available software applications to be displayed on the GUI.

17-29. (Canceled)

30.   (Previously Presented)   The system of claim 9 wherein the computer of the centralized facility is further programmed to:
          receive a user ID input; and
          verify authorization of the user ID input to request enablement of the identified user selection.

31.   (Canceled)

33-42. (Canceled)